

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 29.

Claims 17 – 35 are amended to clarify the claim language. No new matter is introduced.

The dependencies of claims 19 – 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, and 30 – 35 have been corrected. Claims 19 – 21 depend from claim 17. Claim 23 depends from claim 22. Claim 25 depends from claim 24. Claims 27 and 28 depend from claim 26. Claims 30 and 32 depend from claim 29. Claim 31 depends from claim 30. Claims 33 – 35 depend from claim 18.

Claims 17, 18, 22, 24, and 26 are amended to resolve the antecedent basis issues raised by the Examiner.

Claim 22 as amended now explicitly defines the respective relationships between the whole backside surface, the semiconductor wafer, and the wafer holding means. As recited in the claim, the whole backside surface is a part of the semiconductor wafer. The whole backside surface of the wafer is in face to face contact with the wafer holding means.

In view of the foregoing, the application is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance, and prompt favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

Serial No. 10/019,056  
Amendment Dated: 1/14/2004  
Reply to Office Action Dated 10/15/2003

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit

Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #02936850674).

Respectfully submitted,



J. D. Evans  
Registration No. 26,269  
Lawrence E. Carter  
Registration No. 51,532

CROWELL & MORING LLP  
Intellectual Property Group  
P.O. Box 14300  
Washington, DC 20044-4300  
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500  
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844

JDE:LEC  
Document#299327

RECEIVED  
JAN 21 2004  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800